



INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC) APPROVAL POLICY, PROCESSES & PROTOCOLS

The Florida Aquarium (the “Aquarium”) is committed to supporting, facilitating and conducting purpose-focused research which has scientific merit, rigor, defensibility and need, aids in the conservation of species and/or ecosystems, improves animal husbandry and/or welfare, adds to the scientific knowledge of the species in our care, and/or forwards guest experience and education impacts.

Any in-situ or ex-situ project in which animals will be involved in invasive procedures that may result in pain, harm, distress, or significantly and/or adversely altering of behavior as part of the research protocol (excluding veterinary or husbandry procedures) must receive an IACUC approval recommendation before it can be considered for approval by the Aquarium’s Research Committee.

IACUC APPROVAL PROCESSES & PROTOCOLS

If a project requires IACUC approval, the processes and protocols listed below must be followed:

1. The Research Committee will provide the Research Project Proposal to the IACUC Working Group for review.
2. The IACUC Working Group will:
 - assure that if the PI’s institution requires IACUC Approval, the approval is attached to the current Research Project Proposal.
 - review the Research Project Proposal to assure that:
 - all proposed activities involving animals are detailed;
 - assurances that alternatives to potentially painful procedures were actively considered;
 - a veterinarian was consulted in the design of the project to assure that pain or distress animals might experience will be avoided or minimized; and
 - the project does not unnecessarily duplicate previous experiments.
3. The IACUC Working Group will complete their review by either recommending (or not recommending) approval of the Research Project Proposal by completing and signing the IACUC Approval Recommendation Form and returning it to the Research Committee within 14 days of receipt.

If Research Project Proposal is approved, the IACUC Working Group will:

- inspect all Florida Aquarium animal facilities and meet with researchers to review methodology and the project every six months;
- consistently monitor the project for humane care and use of animals;
- consistently evaluate compliance with the AWA and other requirements;
- investigate any project concerns or complaints received from personnel or the public;
- suspend an activity involving animals if the activity is not being conducted in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and as approved by the IACUC Working Group;

- review any significant changes in the methodology that may arise later.